

Letters

Dear Editor:
This is an open letter to the Torrance Unified School District:

When Vandalism becomes a serious problem; When an important override tax issue is voted down.

When students are reshuffled among three grade schools, ending up with three empty classrooms in one, double session through third grade in the second, and reports of some confusion in the third;— it would seem logical for the School Board to promote community cooperation, and to encourage any established volunteer group providing wholesome recreation for children in the interest of normal social development.

Instead, after five years, the "Youth Activities" affiliation of the Southwest Park Civic Association has been refused approval of their routine application for use of the public schools.

Space has been approved for specialized organizations such as Cub Scouts, Brownies, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Little League, etc., yet the "Youth Activities" group was the only one regularly paying a \$10.00 per evening charge for custodian fees.

"Youth Activities" is a group of volunteer workers who have organized a non-profit program including an annual Christmas party for small children, a yearly "Easter Egg Hunt" in the local park, and a "Funtime" social evening held one Friday each month in the cafeteria of two local schools. In addition to the social activities, funds have been raised for donation to such organizations as the Torrance Youth Band and the City of Hope.

The parents who give their time and efforts are, in many cases, the same parents who work in the welfare projects sponsored by the school — and who supervise these children in the other programs taking place at the school.

The refusal of their routine application determines that "Youth Activities" is "NOT in the best interests of the educational program."

These facts must be faced: The community served by Steele and Flavian Elementary Schools has no recreational meeting place for students except the schools.

There is no local theatre, no soda fountain, nothing that would at least serve as a "place to go" on a Friday or Saturday evening once a month. There is, as yet, not even a library — no community building within walking or biking distance — absolutely nothing to meet the normal desire of all children to "go somewhere" or "do something" with their friends and companions.

The Torrance Recreation Reporter for Oct. lists a splendid program for playgrounds on afternoons and Saturdays at the larger parks. The adult program is excellent in scope. The one youth activity listed for "after supper" hours is — "tumbling" — 45 minute sessions.

What factors were considered in turning down the Youth Activities application for public school space one evening each month for a student recreation program?

THE EVENING HOURS? The other approved groups meet in the evening. A lack of decorum at these "fun-times?" Too much noise? Not enough restrictions?

Children "dress up" for these evenings, and — as is natural —, act accordingly. Parents attending these events can verify the excellent record of behavior and the close adult supervision.

To much "cleaning up?" Destruction of school property?

This group alone pays the fee for the service of a custodian, yet it has always been the piley for the adult volunteer workers to "pick up," and leave the room little worse for being but to use than it was before. In fact, the sweeping is often done by those supervising — and not left for the custodian.

An adult (baseball) meeting caused the replacing of a new table top — (the organization willingly paid the cost and continues to use the school as a meeting place).

PTA Carnivals and activities — Cub Pack Meetings — many events approved by the School have left far worse cleaning problems than the "Fun Times."

The activity provided? "Dancing" to a record player was the most popular activity. Numbers such as the "Bunny Hop" and "Hokey Pakey" (taught in Play-ground Nursery Schools and Activity Classes) were or-

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